
REPORT 3
(1215/52/IM)

COMMEMORATIVE POLICY REVIEW

1. Purpose of Report

To recommend that the Commemorative Policy is amended to allow for:

- the costs for commemorative trees, furniture and plaques to be set by officers on a cost-recovery basis
- the styles for commemorative furniture and plaques to be set by officers.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee:

1. *Receive the information.*
2. *Note that the Commemorative Policy was adopted in March 2003 and amended in April 2004 to include policy direction on the interment or scattering of ashes and interment of human remains by members of the public, on or in public land.*
3. *Agree that the general framework for the interment or scattering of ashes and interment of human remains by members of the public, on or in public land as set out in the Commemorative Policy is satisfactory and the process is maintained.*
4. *Recommend to Council that it agree to amend the Commemorative Policy to allow Council officers to set the:*
 - a) *fees and charges for commemorative trees, furniture and plaques*
 - b) *design and style guidelines for commemorative furniture.*

3. Background

The Commemorative Policy 2003 directs the placement, management and recording of commemorative memorials in Wellington City's parks and reserves. The policy was amended by the Built and Natural Environment Committee in April 2004 to deal with requests for scattering or interring ashes or interring other human remains on public land. The amendments allowed some of these practices to occur on public land in a culturally sensitive and managed framework. The Parks and Gardens Business Unit is currently responsible for implementing all aspects of the Commemorative Policy (see appendix 1, section 8 to view amendments).

The Commemorative Policy now states that the following activities are permitted on public land once approval is granted by the Council and its treaty partners:

- scattering ashes
- interring ashes in a biodegradable container
- interring placentas that do not contain formaldehyde.

The following interment activities are only permitted under the controlled interment protocol established by the Burial and Cremation Act 1964 in Council cemeteries and are not permitted on any other public sites under any circumstances:

- interment of human remains including body parts
- interment of dead foetuses
- interment of placentas containing formaldehyde
- interment of ashes in non-biodegradable containers.

Members of the public wishing to scatter ashes, inter ashes or inter placentas on public land must apply for permission from the Council. Once an application is received, Council officers - in conjunction with our treaty partners - determine if the land identified in the application is appropriate. Willowbank Park and Charles Plimmer Park are examples of areas that have received prior approval for scattering ashes, interring ashes and/or interring placentas. Areas that will not receive approval for the permitted activities include:

- Maori heritage sites
- land with high public usage
- sports fields and other sites that would be inappropriate based on current usage
- land that may be disrupted in the future e.g. excavations, tree removals.

Any costs associated with memorials commemorating the scattering or interring of ashes or interring placentas (such as seats, plaques or trees) are the responsibility of the memorial sponsor. The Built and Natural Environment Committee agreed that a review be undertaken on these amendments and officers have taken the opportunity to review the remainder of the policy as well.

4. Discussion

4.1 Review of interment and scattering policy framework

The framework for managing requests by the public for scattering or interring ashes or interring other human remains on public land has been reviewed by officers. Since the framework was approved in 2004, there have been six requests for interring ashes or placentas on public land, all of which were approved. All interments were marked with a commemorative tree planting.

The interments took place in either Willowbank Park or Charles Plimmer Park. No requests were made for scatterings or interments for other public sites although it is possible and likely that some scatterings of ashes occur on public land without the knowledge or approval of Council. This is not deemed to be a significant issue. As indicated in the policy, Council will deal with requests for scatterings or interments on sites other than Willowbank Park or Charles Plimmer Park on a case-by-case basis in conjunction with treaty partners.

It is recommended that the current policy framework for managing requests for scattering or interring ashes or interring other human remains on public land is maintained. The process is operating effectively with no significant issues or problems.

4.2 Amendments for costs and styles of commemorative memorials

In addition to the review of the framework for managing request for scatterings and interments, officers also reviewed the overall effectiveness of the Commemorative Policy. While the policy framework is deemed to be adequate and efficient, sections of the policy that set costs for commemorative memorials and set styles of commemorative furniture need to be amended.

The Policy outlines the costs associated with both commemorative tree planting and commemorative furniture. These costs reflect the current labour and material costs but these will likely fluctuate in the future (the cost for commemorative trees has already increased from \$110 to \$150). It is therefore advised that the Policy is amended to state that the costs of commemorative trees, furniture and plaques will be determined by Council officers on a cost-recovery basis i.e. they will be set in the Annual Plan each year to reflect actual costs.

The Policy also outlines the type and style of commemorative furniture that can be used. While these styles are satisfactory it is envisaged that new styles will become available in the future. It is therefore advised that the Policy is amended to allow Council officers to approve different styles of commemorative furniture. The amended policy will give the Council and the public more choice and flexibility regarding commemorative memorials.

The recommended amendments are highlighted in the attached policy.

5. Conclusion

Officers conducted a review of the effectiveness of the Commemorative Policy 2003. Based on this review, it is advised that the policy is amended to allow Council officers to set:

- costs for commemorative trees, furniture and plaques on a cost-recovery basis
- the design and style guidelines for commemorative furniture.

Contact Officer: *Zach Rissel, Policy Advisor*

Supporting Information

1) Strategic Fit / Strategic Outcome

The policy supports the following Council outcomes:

- **2.1 Safety**
- **5.3 Open Space and Recreation**
- **9.1 Mana Whenua Partnership**

2) LTCCP/Annual Plan reference and long term financial impact

This amendment will be covered from existing budgets.

3) Treaty of Waitangi considerations

Aspects of this policy are of significance to Māori and Council's Treaty Relations Team has been consulted regarding this report.

4) Decision-Making

This is not a significant decision.

5) Consultation

a) General Consultation

The report does not require consultation.

b) Consultation with Maori

The original Policy was developed with consultation with local iwi. This report has been developed with consultations with Council's Treaty Relations Team.

6) Legal Implications

No legal advice has been received for this report.

7) Consistency with existing policy

This report makes recommendations which are consistent with the existing Wellington City Council Commemorative Policy.

COMMEMORATIVE POLICY WELLINGTON CITY COUNCIL



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1. BACKGROUND

The Commemorative Policy provides the Council with a framework to guide the location of commemorative memorials and to assist with their management.

Commemorative memorials can have a dual purpose both in helping to celebrate the lasting legacy of deaths, births, special events as well as helping the revegetation and enhancement of our parks and reserves throughout the city. Previously, management and maintenance issues for commemorative memorials were made on a case-by-case basis. It is considered important that these practices be formalised to ensure a consistent management process and a positive response to requests.

The Commemorative Policy also provides Council with a managed framework for dealing with requests by the public for scattering and interring ashes and other human remains on public land in a culturally sensitive manner.

2. OBJECTIVES

The primary aim of this Policy is to direct the placement, management and recording of commemorative memorials in Wellington City's parks and reserves. The objective of this Policy is therefore:

To ensure that commemorative memorials in the City's parks and reserves are well placed and complementary to the surrounding environment, while meeting the needs of the sponsor and parks and reserves management activities.

Application for other types of memorials will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Sculptures and other artwork will be managed under the Public Arts Policy.

The secondary aim of the Policy is to manage requests for scattering and interring ashes and other human remains on public land in a culturally sensitive manner.

3. APPLICATION PROCESS FOR COMMEMORATIVE MEMORIALS

To ensure the consistent application of this policy, the following process will be used for requests for commemorative trees and furniture:

1. Initial information and discussion with a Council officer (if required)

2. Application form filled in by applicant
3. Application assessed by the Council (processing of application will take up to 10 working days from when it was received)
4. Application accepted, declined or alternatives offered. Discussion with sponsor regarding installation/planting, meeting on site may be required
5. Sponsor notified that installation/planting is complete if undertaken by Council
6. Documentation completed; copy of record sent to sponsor and database management.

4. Commemorative Plantings

Commemorative planting is a popular way of honouring a particular person or for remembering an event or time. It is important that it is managed effectively to ensure that the right type of tree is planted at the right time and in a good location. This means that commemorative planting not only meets the personal needs of the sponsor but it also contributes to the amenity of the location by ensuring healthy specimen trees are well located and complement the surrounding environment.

4.1 Type of Tree

There are two types of commemorative tree plantings, which are described below:

A. Trees for Wellington

The Trees for Wellington recognises a visitor's time in Wellington or a person's relationship to the city. These trees will be recorded for the general area in which they were planted but not the specific location. They can be planted by the Council or by the sponsor if the sponsor is in Wellington during the planting season. The planting areas will coincide with existing re-vegetation programmes.

- *Sponsors can contribute to re-vegetation programmes. The general location of the tree will be recorded but not the specific location.*
- *Sponsors can participate in the planting if they are in Wellington during the planting season otherwise the tree will be planted by the Council.*

B. Commemorative Trees

For people who would like to have an identifiable tree, specimen trees will be available for planting in parks and reserves approved by the Council (see below for list of approved areas). The types of trees available for selection

may vary depending on the numbers available, the suitability of the site for a particular species and the specification of species in planting designs.

- *Sponsors purchase a specimen tree (type of tree will be determined by the Council). The tree will be planted following the purchase in one of the locations specified in this Policy.*
- *The tree species may be limited by the numbers available or suitability to the site chosen.*

C. Cemetery Trees

Both of the above planting options and conditions are available in Karori and Makara Cemeteries.

4.2 Locations

For management purposes, the Council has identified sites that are suitable for commemorative tree planting. For trees commemorating visits by royalty, heads of state and other dignitaries, alternative sites may be selected at the discretion of the Council.

- *Areas for Trees for Wellington commemorative trees will vary from year to year depending on re-vegetation programmes.*
- *Willowbank Park, Charles Plimmer Park and the Cemeteries are currently available for commemorative plantings (refer to map in appendix One). Other parks will become available as planting programmes are developed.*
- *Requests for a certain location within these parks and reserves will be approved at the discretion of the Council.*
- *For plantings commemorating visits by royalty, heads of state and other dignitaries specific locations will be chosen by the Council.*
- *Future parks selected for commemorative planting will be larger parks with open areas which are prepared for specimen tree planting, with good access and a character which is amenable for commemorative planting.*

4.3 Time of Planting

It is important that trees are planted at the right time of year to ensure they remain healthy. Planting usually occurs around August each year but the optimal planting time can vary from tree to tree. The Council will determine the most appropriate planting times for commemorative tree plantings depending on the tree species and will also be responsible for identifying specific dates for tree plantings.

- *Council will identify specific dates for planting of commemorative trees. Council officers will be present on site at the identified*

locations to plant or to assist with the planting of commemorative trees.

- *All commemorative trees will be planted at this time except for in certain circumstances where the Council may approve a tree to be planted at a different time.*

4.4 Type and Cost of Commemorative Trees

The following table outlines examples of commemorative trees available for planting. The availability of species will vary and the chosen location may also affect choice of species. The costs of the planting the tree will be determined by the Council on a cost-recovery basis.

Examples of the types of trees available are outlined in Table 1 below.

TABLE 1: Examples of Commemorative Trees

Programme	Tree Species
Trees for Wellington	A range of native trees including rimu, totara, matai and miro.
Commemorative Trees	A range of deciduous exotic trees and native trees such as ash, ginkgo, alder, kowhai and rewarewa.
Cemetery Trees	Either of the above options.

5. COMMEMORATIVE FURNITURE




5.1 Type and Location of Furniture

To maintain consistency of furniture within parks and reserves and to ensure well located furniture, the design specifications and location will be at the discretion of the Council.

- *The type and location of commemorative furniture will be at the discretion of Council.*
- *Standard furniture designs and styles will be used.*
- *The sponsor will purchase the furniture and fund the installation which will be carried out by the Council. The cost is dependent on current furniture rates and installation costs and will be determined by the Council on a cost-recovery basis.*

Examples of the types of furniture available are outlined below in Table 2 below. The type of commemorative furniture is not limited to the examples in the table and different styles can be approved by the Council.

TABLE 2: Examples of Furniture Types

Type of Furniture	Description
	<p>Cameron Seat</p> <p>Natural timber seat with metal frame.</p>
	<p>Cast-ended memorial seat. Can include concrete pad and bronze plaque. Botanic Gardens and Bolton Street Cemetery only.</p>
	<p>Wellington Seat Botanic Gardens and Cemeteries only.</p>

6. COMMEMORATIVE PLAQUES

6.1 Plaques on commemorative furniture

Plaques on commemorative furniture are permitted and the conditions for installing commemorative plaques are outlined below:

- *Plaques on commemorative furniture are designed and fitted by the Council and will be of standard size of 100mm x 250mm.*
- *The sponsor will be responsible for the costs of the plaque and the costs of attaching the plaque to the furniture.*
- *The Council will carry out the plaque attachment.*

- *The Council will maintain the seats but the plaque remains the responsibility of the sponsor.*

6.2 Other types of Plaques

Generally plaques which are not attached to benches will not be permitted within parks and reserves. This is to ensure that the natural character of the park is not unnecessarily cluttered and to limit maintenance problems. Plaques are permitted in the following cases:

- *In recognition of visits by royalty, heads of state and other dignitaries, commemoration of international, national and local events and other events of a civic nature which are considered appropriate for formal recognition*
- *In recognition of an important historical figure or person associated with the area*
- *In recognition of the opening or unveiling of the park or major facility on the park.*
- *The location of the plaque will ensure maintenance and safety issues are avoided and the amenity of the park is enhanced.*
- *A plaque or sign which outlines the history of the park may be permitted, however the recording of the history of a park or reserve will generally be in the form of a sign rather than a plaque.*

7. RECORDING OF MEMORIALS

Keeping records of commemorative memorials is important for a number of reasons. Many people like to return to the site of the memorial at a later stage and people not familiar with Wellington's parks and reserves may need directions to their memorial. Records are also important for maintenance purposes or if memorials need to be moved or replaced. The records allow the Council to inform the sponsor when such work takes place. The records also provide a historical record for descendants and for the future residents of Wellington.

Each commemorative memorial will be recorded with the following information:

- *Name and contact details of sponsor*
- *Name of and area of park*
- *Type of commemorative memorial*
- *GPS reference or physical measurement*
- *Digital photo with background/landscape elements to assist identification.*

8. INTERMENTS AND SCATTERINGS ON PUBLIC LAND

The Policy's secondary aim is to provide a process for members of the public that request to scatter or inter ashes or other human remains on public land. The Council will permit some of the practices to occur on public land in a culturally sensitive and managed framework. The process for seeking permission and the permitted activities are discussed below.

8.1 Application process

If a member of the public wishes to scatter ashes, inter ashes or inter other human remains they must contact the Council to seek permission. The process for seeking permission for scatterings and interments on public land is outlined below:

1. Member of the public obtains an application form by contacting the Council by phone, mail or fax (see appendix 3). The application form is also available on Council's website (www.wellington.govt.nz).
2. Applicant will complete application form and return to the Council.
3. Application form will be assessed by the Council with consultation with local iwi (processing of application will take up to 10 working days from when it was received)
 - a. If the application is accepted, the Council will discuss issues related to the approved activity and coordinate the activity with the applicant. The applicant will receive documentation of processed application form for their record.
 - b. If the application is declined, the Council will discuss alternatives with applicant.
4. The applicant will proceed with the approved activity on the approved time and date with facilitation from the Council where

necessary. NOTE: The Council will be responsible for any digging that is required.

5. The Council will record the details of the activity, namely:
 - a. Name and contact details of sponsor
 - b. Name of and area of park/reserve for interments
 - c. GPS reference or physical measurement
 - d. Type of commemorative memorial (if applicable).

8.2 Permitted activities for scatterings and interments on public land

The Council will permit members of the public to conduct the following activities on land approved by the Council and the Council's treaty partners in accordance to the Council's set protocol:

- scattering ashes
- interring ashes in a biodegradable container
- interring placentas

8.3 Activities not permitted on public land relating to scatterings and interments

The following interment activities are only permitted under the controlled interment protocol established by the Burial and Cremation Act 1964 in Council cemeteries and are not permitted on any other public sites under any circumstances:

- interment of human remains including body parts
- interment of dead foetus
- interment of placenta containing formaldehyde
- interment of ashes in non-biodegradable container.

If a member of the public wishes to undertake any of the following activities on public land they must contact the Makara or Karori Cemeteries for assistance.

8.4 Scattering and interment sites

The Council, the Wellington Tenth's Trust and Te Runanga o Toa Rangatira Incorporated are responsible for identifying suitable sites for scattering ashes, interment of ashes or the interment of placentas. The following public sites are deemed suitable for scattering ashes, interment of ashes or interment of placentas:

- revegetation areas
- parks and reserves with low to moderate public use.

Willowbank Park and Charles Plimmer Park have received prior approval for scattering ashes, interring ashes and/or interring placentas. The Council, Tenth Trust and Te Runanga o Toa Rangatira Inc. will determine the suitability of other sites on a case-by-case basis.

The following sites are deemed unsuitable for approved scattering and interment activities:

- areas of cultural or heritage significance (e.g. Maori heritage sites)
- high public use sites (e.g. sports field or rose garden at Botanic Gardens)
- sites that have plans for extensive upgrades, renovations or excavations
- unsafe sites (e.g. steep hillsides)

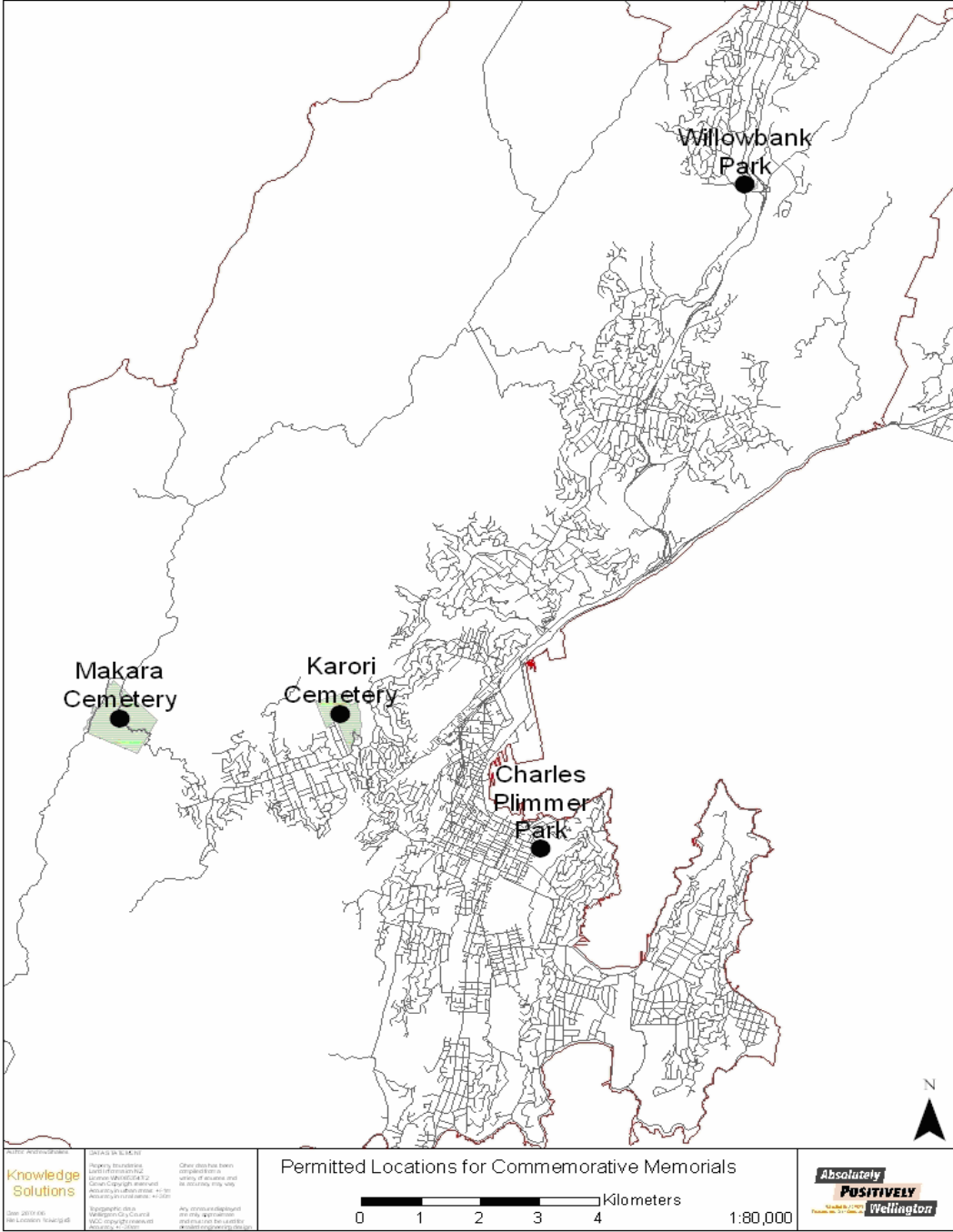
8.4 Memorials

Requests to erect a memorial or plant a memorial tree is dealt with under procedures outlined in the above sections of this Policy. Memorial costs are the responsibility of the person erecting or planting the memorial.


8.5 Regulations

The requirement to gain prior permission to scatter or inter ashes or to inter placentas in public land will be regulated under the Reserves Bylaw.

9. APPENDIX 1 – MAP OF COMMEMORATIVE TREE LOCATIONS



10. APPENDIX 2 – COMMEMORATIVE MEMORIAL APPLICATION FORM



Commemorative Memorial Application

Name of Applicant: _____

Address: _____

Contact Phone: _____

Contact Email: _____

Memorial Details:

Name of person/event that memorial is dedicated to: _____

Reason for commemoration: _____

Type of memorial:

Tree Location: _____

 Type of tree: _____

Furniture Location: _____

 Type of furniture: _____

Plaque Location: _____

 Description: _____

 Text _____
 _____ (see reverse for dimensions & additional space)

Other Location: _____

 Description: _____

NB: All requests are required to meet the policies set out in the *Commemorative Policy*.

Send to:
 Parks and Gardens Business Unit
 Wellington City Council
 PO Box 2199
 Wellington

11. APPENDIX 3 – APPLICATION FORM FOR SCATTERINGS/INTERMENTS

Application Form for Scattering Ashes and/or Interring Ashes or Placentas	
Name of Applicant:	_____
Address:	_____ _____ _____
Contact Phone:	_____
Contact Email:	_____
Memorial Details:	
Name of deceased (if applicable):	_____
Type of activity:	
Scattering ashes <input type="checkbox"/>	Location: _____
Interring ashes in <input type="checkbox"/>	Location: _____
biodegradable container	
Interring placenta <input type="checkbox"/>	Location: _____
Other <input type="checkbox"/>	Location: _____
<i>Please Note: placentas must not contain formaldehyde and must be placed in a biodegradable container</i>	
Description of activity: _____ _____	
Date and timing of interment/scattering:	
Date: _____	Time of day: _____
NB: All requests are required to meet the requirements set out in the <i>Commemorative Policy</i> .	
Please obtain complete a Commemorative Request Application if you wish to commemorate the occasion with a tree planting, installation of furniture or a plaque.	
Send to:	
Manager Parks and Gardens Business Unit Wellington City Council PO Box 2199 Wellington	